

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY LOME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1889
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY ACCRA
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY COTONOU
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 LOME 0703

EO 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PFOR ECIN EAID MASS SHUM TO AO CG UR US
SUBJ: TOGOLESE PRESIDENT EYADEMA'S VIEWS ON CONTEMPORARY AFRICAN
EVENTS

1. INTRODUCTION: I CALLED ON PRESIDENT EYADEMA TODAY
AT MY REQUEST TO HAVE GENERAL DISCUSSION PRIOR TO
RETURNING TO WASHINGTON ON CONSULTATION. EYADEMA WAS
IN A RELAXED AND AFFABLE MOOD AND WE SETTLED COMFORT-
ABLY INTO A CONVERSATION IN WHICH I HAD OPPORTUNITIES
TO RAISE QUESTION OF ZAIRE (STATE 56060), NORTHEAST
AFRICA (STATE 34960) AND OTHER COMPLEMENTARY SUBJECTS.
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THE THREAD WHICH EYADEMA WOVE THROUGH THE DISCUSSION OF
THESE SPECIFIC TOPICS AND OTHERS SUCH AS BENIN AND
MALI WAS THE MOUNTING DANGER OF SOVIET ACTIVITY IN
AFRICA. FOR HIS PART, HE RAISED ISSUES OF WESTERN
SUPPORT FOR REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE, US MILITARY
ASSISTANCE AND HIS HOPE THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION
WOULD CONTINUE ITS "OBJECTIVE" APPROACH TO AFRICA.

2. SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA:

A. ZAIRE.

EYADEMA EXPRESSED HIS APPRECIATION OVER THE ANNOUNCEMENT HE HAD HEARD ON THE RADIO THAT THE US WAS PROVIDING ASSISTANCE TO ZAIRE IN ORDER TO HELP THE MOBUTO GOVERNMENT DEAL WITH THE EX-GENDARMES' ATTACK ON SHABA PROVINCE. HE SAID THAT THIS WAS ENCOURAGING BECAUSE AFRICAN LEADERS WISHED TO HAVE CONCRETE EVIDENCE THAT THE OCCIDENT WAS PREPARED TO HELP THEM IN THEIR STRUGGLE TO DEAL WITH THE PROBLEM OF SOVIET INTERVENTION. HE SAID THERE WAS NO DOUBT IN HIS MIND THAT WHATEVER THIS GROUP WAS THAT WAS ATTACKING ZAIRE THAT IT HAD BEEN EQUIPPED WITH SOVIET ARMS AND WOULD ONLY BE ABLE TO STAY IN THE FIELD AS A RESULT OF SOVIET SUPPORT FUNNELED THROUGH THE ANGOLAN/CUBAN MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT.

B. BENIN.

EYADEMA REVIEWED EVENTS IN BENIN SINCE JAN 16, THE REPORT OF THE SPECIAL UN MISSION AND PETER ONU'S OAU REPORT AND SAID THAT UNTIL RECENTLY THERE HAD BEEN NO HINT IN ANY DOCUMENTATION NOR IN ANY OF THE CONTACTS BETWEEN THE TOGOLESE AND THE BENIN GOVERNMENT OF ANY ACCUSATION OF TOGOLESE INVOLVEMENT IN WHAT HE SKEPTICALLY CALLED THE "FAMOUS MERCENARY RAID." THEREFORE, HE SAID HE WAS ASTONISHED WHEN THE BENINESE BEGAN ACCUSING TOGO, CONFIDENTIAL

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IVORY COAST, SENEGAL AND, OF COURSE, GABON AND MOROCCO, OF MOUNTING THE RAID ON COTONOU. HE SAID HE DID NOT KNOW WHERE THE BENINESE HAD GOTTEN THEIR ALLEGED INFORMATION BUT IT WAS CLEAR TO HIM THAT THE SOVIETS WERE BEHIND THIS EFFORT TO DISCREDIT MODERATE GOVERNMENTS WHICH WERE COPING WITH REASONABLE SUCCESS WITH THE PROBLEMS OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN NON-COMMUNIST WAYS. HE CALLED FOR A MAP AND PROCEEDED TO POINT OUT THE GEOGRAPHIC SIGNIFICANCE OF BENIN IN TERMS OF ITS LINKS WITH NIGERIA, NIGER AND TOGO. HE SAID IF THE INSTABILITY IN BENIN COULD BE SPREAD IN SUCH A WAY AS TO CREATE DIFFICULTIES IN THIS REGION, ONLY ONE POWER COULD BENEFIT: THE SOVIET UNION.

C. SAHELIAN STATES.

LOOKING FARTHER NORTH, EYADEMA STRESSED THAT RADICAL INFLUENCE, ASSISTED BY THE SOVIETS, WAS REACHING SOUTH FROM ALGERIA INTO MALI AND NIGER. HE

SAID THESE WERE OBJECTIVE FACTS AND THEY NEEDED NO EMOTIONAL COLORATION. THE AFRICAN SYSTEM WAS UNDER ATTACK FROM AN EXTERNAL POWER, THE SOVIET UNION, WHICH SOUGHT TO IMPOSE A DIFFERENT IDEOLOGY AND A DIFFERENT SET OF VALUES FROM THOSE WHICH AFRICANS HAD TRADITIONALLY CHERISHED.

D. NORTHEAST AFRICA.

EYADEMA DID NOT APPEAR TO HAVE CONSIDERED THE SITUATION IN THE HORN OF AFRICA IN ANY DEPTH. FOREIGN MINISTER KODJO, WHO WAS PRESENT, MENTIONED THE PROBLEMS OF ERITREA, SOMALIA AND DJIBOUTI BUT THE PRESIDENT DID NOT FOCUS ON THE POTENTIAL FOR INSTABILITY IN THIS REGION OTHER THAN TO SAY IT WAS A PART OF THE GENERAL PATTERN HE PERCEIVED OF SOVIET INTERVENTION THROUGHOUT THE CONTINENT.
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EM DOMESTIC SITUATION: I ASKED EYADEMA IF HE WOULD CHARACTERIZE HIS FIRST TEN YEARS IN POWER AND HOW HE SAW THE FUTURE. HE SAID THAT WHEN HE SEIZED POWER IN 1967 IT WAS IN A SITUATION OF DOMESTIC ANARCHY IN WHICH THE POLITICAL PARTIES WERE AT EACH OTHERS THROATS. HE SAID HE IMPOSED DISCIPLINE AND HAD FOLLOWED THE GENERAL GUIDELINES OF PROMOTING NATIONAL UNITY, REDUCING DISCRIMINATION BETWEEN REGIONS AND ETHNIC GROUPS AND GENERALLY TRYING TO PROMOTE DOMESTIC RECONCILIATION. HE SAID IT WAS IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST THAT TOGOLESE OF ALL BACKGROUNDS COOPERATE AND HE HAD FOUNDED THE RASSEMBLEMENT DU PEUPLE TOGOLAIS (RPT) TO BE A FRAME OF REFERENCE WITHIN WHICH THIS COOPERATION COULD BE ENGENDERED. AS HE LOOKED INTO THE FUTURE, HIS VISION WAS THAT POLITICAL STABILITY WOULD CONTINUE TO BE ACHIEVED AND STRENGTHENED THROUGH THE RPT. THE CRUCIAL QUESTION WAS TO CONTINUE ECONOMIC GROWTH AND TO SEEK TO ACHIEVE COMPLEMENTARITY WITH OTHER STATES IN THE REGION IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST OF ALL.

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IGA-02 EB-08 COME-00 OPIC-03 XMB-02 /115 W

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R 161400Z MAR 77

FM AMEMBASSY LOME

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4. REGIONAL COOPERATION: EYADEMA SAID THAT HE HAD DISCUSSED THE IDEA OF REGIONAL COMPLEMENTARITY IN 1972 WITH GENERAL GOWAN OF NIGERIA AND IT WAS THE IDEA WHICH HAD LED TO FORMULATION OF ECOWAS. THE VIABILITY OF THE IDEA HAD SURVIVED THE CHANGE IN GOVERNMENT IN NIGERIA AND HE SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE CONTINUITY OF GOOD RELATIONS WITH NIGERIA IN THE REGIONAL INTEREST OF FINDING WAYS THAT GREATER EXCHANGES OF ALL SORTS, BUT PARTICULARLY THE GROWTH IN REGIONAL TRADE AND REGIONAL INVESTMENT, COULD TAKE PLACE. IT WAS IN THIS SPIRIT, EYADEMA SAID, THAT SUCCESSFUL SUB-REGIONAL COOPERATION BETWEEN MALI, UPPER VOLTA, NIGER AND TOGO WAS TAKING PLACE WITH
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RESPECT TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE PORT OF LOME AS AN OUTLET FOR THE SAHEL. HE NOTED THAT UPPER VOLTA, MALI AND NIGER WERE DEVELOPING WAREHOUSING FACILITIES IN THE LOME FREE PORT AND THAT THE GROUP PLANNED TO UNDERTAKE ANOTHER APPROACH TO MACNAMARA AND THE WORLD BANK TO OBTAIN RESOURCES FOR THE ROAD AND RAILROAD SYSTEM EXTENDING FROM LOME INTO THE NORTH. HE SAID MACNAMARA HAD BEEN SKEPTICAL OF THE PROJECT IN THE PAST BUT THAT THESE SEVERAL STATES HOPED TO CONVINCE THE BANK OF THE VIABILITY OF THE PROJECT.

5. US-AFRICAN RELATIONS: EYADEMA USED WHAT HE CALLED A SOLDIER'S PROVERB TO INDICATE HIS HOPES FOR US RELATIONSHIP WITH AFRICA GENERALLY AND TOGO PARTICULARLY. "IN ORDER TO SMELL THE TOILET YOU HAVE TO BE CLOSE ENOUGH TO IT. AMERICA NEEDS TO SMELL THE TOILET." HE LAUGHED AND SAID THE IMAGE WAS RATHER VIVID BUT WHAT HE MEANT WAS THAT AMERICA COULD NOT BE INDIFFERENT TO WHAT WAS GOING ON IN AFRICA; THAT WE HAD TO BE INVOLVED. HE WAS PLEASED TO DATE BY THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S "OBJECTIVE" APPROACH TO AFRICA AND ITS WILLINGNESS TO TAKE AFRICANS SERIOUSLY AND TO RECOGNIZE THAT AFRICA FACES GRAVE PROBLEMS WHICH ONLY THE OCCIDENT COULD HELP SOLVE IN A MANNER THAT WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH THE AFRICAN PAST AND CONGRUENT WITH THE US NATIONAL INTEREST. HE SAID IT COULD NOT BE STRESSED TO MUCH THAT THE AFRICAN STATES, INCLUDING TOGO, WERE WEAK POLITICALLY AND ECONOMICALLY AND NEEDED BOTH MATERIAL AND POLITICAL SUPPORT TO ACHIEVE THE TYPE OF DEVELOPMENT THAT WOULD ENABLE THEM TO RESIST BANEFUL (NEFASTE) SOVIET DISRUPTION. AT THIS POINT, HE REFERRED TO THE RHODESIAN SITUATION AND SAID SIMPLY THAT THE US SHOULD CONTINUE ITS ROLE TO TRY TO ACHIEVE SOME FORM OF PEACEFUL TRANSITION TO MAJORITY RULE BECAUSE PROTRACTED WAR IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WOULD ONLY BENEFIT THE SOVIETS.

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YM ECONOMIC RELATIONS: EYADEMA SAID THAT TOGO WAS SEEKING INVESTMENT TO CREATE A PHOSPATIC FERTILIZER PLANT THAT WOULD UTILIZE ITS PHOSPHATE ROCK RESOURCES TO CREATE VALUE ADDED IN TOGO RATHER THAN SHIPPING THE RAW PRODUCT TO FRANCE. HE SAID DISCUSSIONS HAD BEEN HELD WITH THE AGRICO-SWIFT COMPANY AND THAT TOGO WOULD WELCOME US INVESTMENT IN THIS PROJECT. IN ANY CASE, HE SAID THAT TOGO'S REGIONAL ECONOMIC POSITION WAS SUCH THAT HE HOPED THAT MORE AMERICAN BUSINESSMEN WOULD TAKE THE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT THE COUNTRY AND TO LOOK INTO POSSIBLE TRADE OPPORTUNITIES.

7. MILITARY ASSISTANCE: AS THE CONVERSATION WAS ENDING, EYADEMA SAID THAT TOGO HOPED TO GET MILITARY ASSISTANCE FROM THE US. DRAWING UPON STATE 40813 AND LOME 434, I EXPLAINED THAT THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WAS IN THE PROCESS OF MAKING A STUDY OF THE ENTIRE QUESTION OF ARMS TRANSFERS AND THE FUTURE OF US MILITARY ASSISTANCE POLICY WOULD BE DETERMINED BY THIS STUDY. ANY QUESTION OF ARMS TRANSFERS TO TOGO WOULD BE A LONG TIME OFF IN THE FUTURE. I TOLD HIM HE WAS WELL AWARE OF THE REASONS WHY THERE HAD NOT

BEEN US ARMS TRANSFERS TO TOGO IN THE PAST. HE SAID HE KNEW. (THE REFERENCE HERE IS TO US REACTION IN 1963 TO THE MURDER OF PRESIDENT OLYMPIO). HOWEVER, I SAID IT SEEMED TO ME THAT RATHER THAN GET INTO THE QUESTION OF ARMS TRANSFERS, WHICH WAS A DIFFICULT QUESTION, THAT IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO CONCENTRATE ON THE POSSIBILITY OF SEEKING MORE US-TOGOLESE MILITARY CONTACT THROUGH SUCH IDEAS AS POSSIBLE TRAINING AND ORIENTATION VISITS BY TOGOLESE MILITARY TO THE US AND A CONTINUATION OF US SHIP VISITS AND SIMILAR CONTACTS. I SAID THAT I DID NOT KNOW WHETHER OR HOW IT MIGHT BE POSSIBLE FOR TOGOLESE TO GET SUCH TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES BUT THAT I WOULD LOOK INTO THE MATTER. EYADEMA AGREED THAT THIS WAS A USEFUL APPROACH AND CONFIDENTIAL

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HE SAID THAT YOU FAVORED THE IDEA OF INCREASED MILITARY CONTACTS BECAUSE THIS WOULD BE A MEANS OF INCREASING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING OF SECURITY PROBLEMS.

8. COMMENT: IN THIS 45 MINUTE CONVERSATION, PRESIDENT EYADEMA TOOK THE OPPORTUNITY TO ATTEMPT TO COVER AS MANY BASES AS POSSIBLE IN THE HOPE THAT HIS VIEWS ON ISSUES OF THE DAY COULD BE TRANSMITTED TO THE NEW ADMINISTRATION AT THIS POINT WHERE ITS POLICIES ARE STILL IN THE FORMATIVE PROCESS. HIS VIEWS ON SOVIET ACTIVITIES IN AFRICA ARE CONSISTENT WITH WHAT HE HAS BEEN SAYING SINCE THE ANGOLAN CRISIS. HE IS CLEARLY HOPEFUL THAT THE USG WILL TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN INTERACTING WITH THE AFRICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM. SPECIFICALLY, HE APPEARS INTERESTED IN IMPROVING US-TOGOLESE RELATIONS. PALMER

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